

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

John I. Lebeaux, Chairman (2001)
Thomas A. Fiore, Vice-Chairman (2001)
Bruce R. Card, Clerk (2002)
Maurice M. DePalo (2002)
Philip S. Hammond (2003)

MEETINGS

The Board of Selectmen meets in open session on Monday evenings at 7:00 PM in the Selectmen's Meeting Room. Meetings are generally held on alternate Mondays. At these meetings the Board conducts the general business of the Town of Shrewsbury pursuant to the Town Charter and the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The meeting schedule is available by visiting or contacting the Selectmen's Office (508-841-8504) or by accessing the Town's Internet Web Site (www.ci.shrewsbury.ma.us). The regular meetings are broadcast live on Shrewsbury Public Access Channel 33 and are replayed at other times for public convenience.

The Board also holds special meetings and workshops. In January it held its Annual Legislative Meeting with Congressman James P. McGovern and State Representative Ronald W. Gauch. This meeting allows the Board and other Town officials to discuss with the Town's legislators how various federal and state policies and programs affect the Town of Shrewsbury. This meeting continues to be an excellent forum for the exchange of ideas, and a wonderful opportunity to convey local concerns to our legislators.

The Board also conducted workshop sessions at which it reviewed particular issues with the Town Manager and appropriate Department Heads. In 2000 the Board held workshop sessions on Public Works Priorities and Financial Issues.

In May the Board began taping a cable access television program, *Selectmen's Roundtable*, on a regular basis. The program's purpose is to allow the Board to present to the public issues concerning the Town in a more informal manner than at the regular meetings. This program is seen at various times on Shrewsbury Public Access Channel 33. New programs air every two weeks.

BOARD MEMBERS

In February, Selectman Laurie L. Hogan announced her decision to retire from the Board at the conclusion of her term in May. Selectman Hogan served with great distinction as a Board Member for seven years. Among her many important contributions to the Town as a Selectman were working to select a new Town Manager in 1997, participating in the design of the Town Manager Evaluation Process, and serving as the Board's liaison to the Senior Center Building Committee. The Board recognizes the great value of her service to the Town.

At The Annual Town Election on May 1, 2000 Philip S. Hammond was elected to the Board of Selectmen for a three-year term. At its first meeting after the election the Board organized as follows: John I. Lebeaux, Chairman; Thomas A. Fiore, Vice-Chairman; Bruce R. Card, Clerk.

RETIREMENT OF REPRESENTATIVE GAUCH

The Board wishes to note the retirement of Ronald W. Gauch, Shrewsbury's Representative in the General Court for the last eight years. Mr. Gauch previously served as a Selectman for thirteen years, a Finance Committee member for six years and as a Town Meeting Member for twenty-eight years. Shrewsbury is a better place to live and work due to Ron Gauch's many years of effort on behalf of the Town. The Board wishes him a long and happy retirement.

TOWN MANAGER

The Board conducted its Annual Evaluation of the Town Manager in June. Town Manager Daniel J. Morgado's overall performance was judged to be excellent to distinguished.

The Board found Mr. Morgado to be a thoughtful, effective decision-maker regardless of how difficult the circumstances might be. It concluded that he works diligently to deliver a high level of services to the people of the Town in a fiscally responsible manner. The Board was particularly impressed with the Manager's sound financial management of the financial resources available to the town. It approved of Mr. Morgado's active inclusion of the Department Heads in both financial and operational planning, furthering their professional growth and leadership skills.

The evaluation also found Mr. Morgado to work well with the Board of Selectmen, keeping it informed of important matters, seeking its counsel on major decisions, and providing excellent administrative support and comprehensive background material when requested by the Board. Similarly, Mr. Morgado was found to be very effective in his relationships with members of the various boards and committees and with the municipal employees.

In consideration of his performance to date, the Board unanimously voted to reappoint him as Town Manager for a three-year term expiring October 1, 2003.

No discussion of the Board's high regard for the accomplishments of the Town Manager would be complete without making note of the role played by Assistant Town Manager Michael R. Hale. Mr. Hale is a great asset to our management team. He is a very effective administrator in his own right, quietly improving the efficiency of our municipal government.

ACTIVITIES AND ISSUES

The Board of Selectmen conducts hearings as the Local Licensing Authority, acts as Appointing Authority, and proposes legislation to the Town Meeting throughout the year. Items of particular note for the year 2000 are listed below.

Wastewater Management Study Begins

In January Town Engineer Jack Perreault briefed the Board on new requirements from the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) regarding wastewater discharge. Shrewsbury discharges into the Assabet River after the water is treated at the Westborough Treatment Plant, which is owned by the Towns of Shrewsbury and Westborough. Though the Plant now operates well within all state guidelines, DEP has informed all communities discharging into the Assabet that new more restrictive guidelines will be imposed in the future. Mr. Perreault informed the Board that an effort by all the communities discharging into the Assabet, the Towns of Hudson, Maynard, Northborough, Shrewsbury, Westborough, and the City of Marlborough was being considered to study the problem jointly to allow the study to be done in the most economic manner.

In February a Special Town Meeting authorized the Town to become a member of the Assabet River Consortium and to borrow \$500,000 for the Town's share of the Comprehensive Wastewater Management Study. The funds were borrowed at 0% interest for twenty years from a state program.

In September the Board signed Shrewsbury on as a member of the Assabet River Consortium. The Board met with the coordinating engineering firm's representative to discuss the project. The Board was informed that the overall volume of how much wastewater can be discharged, and the quality of that discharged water are likely subject to tighter restrictions in the near future. Such restrictions would require that the Assabet River Consortium communities share costs in the tens of millions of dollars.

The Board has great concern over this issue and will keep close watch on the process. Increases of sewer rates will necessary to fund these studies and improvements. All future growth and development of sewer service will be under very tight rein if tighter restrictions are imposed. Such restrictions could take many of the decisions of how the Town should grow out of local control.

Senior Center Opens

The Grand Opening of the Senior Center took place on February 17, 2000. Since that time the building has been used to great advantage by a large number of our senior population. The building, designed by Lamoureux, Pagano & Associates and built by Masiello Construction, is both beautiful and highly functional.

The Board recognizes the excellent job done by the Senior Center Building Committee for constructing the building on time and under budget. Members are John Concordia, Chairman, Joseph Davolio, Judy O'Connor, Arthur Quitadamo, Tim Swiss, Council on Aging Director Sharon Yeager, Superintendent of Public Buildings Robert Cox, Assistant Town Manager Michael Hale, Town Manager Daniel Morgado, and Selectman Laurie Hogan.

Furnishing the building was achieved by the donations of generous individuals and businesses. The Friends of the Shrewsbury Senior Center, Inc. managed this very successful fundraising.

School Building Projects Continue

The February Special Town Meeting approved borrowing \$22 million to reconstruct the present High School into a Middle School. The voters approved this borrowing as a Debt Exclusion from the provisions of Proposition 2-1/2 at Special Town Election on March 14th.

This project is the second component of the two-part plan to provide more space to the Town's increasing school population. This project is anticipated not to begin until June 2002, and is to be ready for the school year in September 2003. Starting the process in 2000 speeded up how quickly the Town will receive its 64% reimbursement from the state. It also locked in that 64% reimbursement rate for this project. A new formula for state reimbursement was put into effect January 1, 2001. It appears that the Town would not receive as large a reimbursement if it had waited to submit the project for approval.

The Groundbreaking Ceremony for the new High School atop Sewall Hill took place October 12, 2000. By the end of 2000 the parcel had been cleared, foundations poured for some parts of the building, and the steel framework was being erected. The schedule calls for the school to be ready for the beginning of the school year in September 2002.

During the fall it was discovered that there is substantially more ledge on the property than the amount that was projected and for which funds were budgeted. The High School/Middle School Building Committee will provide a revised estimate of these costs during Winter/Spring 2001. Once the revised estimate is available, the Committee will see how much of the additional costs can be covered by contingencies within the budget and how much cannot. The Town will then devise a plan to present to the Town Meeting for the additional funding.

Master Plan Update Begins

The Annual Town Meeting authorized an expenditure of \$100,000 to update the Town's Master Plan as proposed by the Planning Board. The Board of Selectmen unanimously supported this action.

For the past several years there has been much discussion throughout the community about the future of the Town. Though the discussion has been thoughtful and spirited, it did not lead to any consensus of how the Town might position itself for the next twenty-five to thirty years.

The Planning Board's Master Plan Study proposal to the Town Meeting proposed a Master Plan Steering Committee to oversee the project and manage the work provided by hired consultants. The Steering Committee was designed to have a large number of members of the community so that it would reflect the sense of the townspeople rather than the sense of the Town Hall. The majority of the Committee is comprised of sixteen Town Meeting Representatives selected by the Moderator. One member or designee of

appropriate Town boards also serves on the Committee. The Board of Selectmen's designee to the Master Plan Steering Committee is Laurie Hogan.

At the time of this writing an early draft of the Master Plan document is being presented to the public for its comment. It is intended that the Master Plan will be finished during the winter and early spring of 2001 so that it can be presented to the May, 2001 Annual Town Meeting, and that any suggested legislative changes can be considered by that body.

CLOSING

The year 2000 was a successful one for the Town of Shrewsbury. The employees of the Town, the Department Heads, supervisors, and line personnel continue to efficiently deliver a very high level of services to the community. The volunteer efforts of the various boards, committees, and commissions maintain the will of the townspeople. Everyone should be grateful for all these individuals' willingness to offer their time and service to improve the community. Please refer to their individual reports for detailed information about their activities.

The Board would be remiss if it did not take note of the numerous donations and gifts made to the Town by many of its residents and local businesses. These gifts and donations add to the quality of life of every member of this community. The Board wishes to extend its sincere gratitude on behalf of the Town to each and every resident and business that were willing to do something extra to make Shrewsbury a better place to live and work.

The Board depends on the staff of the combined office of the Board of Selectmen and the Town Manager for its support of the Board's duties and responsibilities. The office was reorganized in January. Paula Brady was promoted to secretary to the Town Manager and Janice McCoy became secretary to the Board of Selectmen. This new support team maintained the excellent standards on which the Board has counted for many years.

Respectfully Submitted,
Board of Selectmen